



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/574,735	04/05/2006	Siegfried Oesterle	SFS-PT065 (P0381US)	5435
3624	7590	07/09/2009		EXAMINER
VOLPE AND KOENIG, P.C. UNITED PLAZA, SUITE 1600 30 SOUTH 17TH STREET PHILADELPHIA, PA 19103			HAUGLAND, SCOTT J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3654	
			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			07/09/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/574,735	Applicant(s) OESTERLE ET AL.
	Examiner SCOTT HAUGLAND	Art Unit 3654

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 March 2009.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 16 March 2009 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1668)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: The brief description of new Fig. 2 in the specification required by 37 CFR 1.74 is not present.

Appropriate correction is required.

Drawings

Drawings were received on 3/16/09. These drawings are accepted.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The language of claim 1, lines 6-7 is unclear and appears inaccurate. Based on applicants' arguments and new Fig. 2, it appears that the diameter of the other bar does not vary and that "varying diameter" in claim 1, line 7 should be --different diameter than the torsion bar--.

Claim 8, lines 4-5 is unclear and appears incomplete or inaccurate. The torque applied to the torsion bar depends on elements external to the torsion bar and would

vary during normal use in a seat belt retractor. It is assumed that the language refers to the relationship between deformation of the torsion bar and applied torque which inherently depends on the diameter of the torsion bar.

All claims should be revised carefully to correct all other deficiencies similar to the ones noted above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3 and 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Wier (U.S. Pat. No. 6,206,315).

Wier discloses a torsion bar 10, 12 for application in belt winders for safety belts, comprising a bar having end sections on which drive and/or locking elements for

Art Unit: 3654

positive connection to respective devices are arranged. The torsion bar is made of aluminum and has a conical section or flute between the drive and/or locking elements.

The bar appears to be the same as the claimed torsion bar. Assuming, arguendo, that it is not, it would have been obvious to form the bar in one piece in a cold forming impact extrusion process since it is old and well known to form metal objects using such a process. The torsion bar of Wier is capable of being exchanged for another bar having a different or varying diameter as recited in claim 1, lines 5-7.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wier (U.S. Pat. No. 6,206,315).

Wier does not disclose that the aluminum has a 99.5% by vol. purity.

It would have been a matter of obvious engineering choice to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the torsion bar of aluminum having a purity of 99.5% since it would have required no more than routine experimentation to determine the acceptable level of purity of aluminum to obtain the desired workability and energy absorbing capability.

Response to Arguments

Applicants' arguments filed 3/16/09 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicants argue that the combination of Clute and Wier does not suggest a torsion bar for application in belt winders for safety belts having a non-ferrous bar

whose diameter is a function of the torque achieved by drive or locking elements at ends thereof and that neither reference mentions a non-ferrous metal bar produced in one piece in a cold forming impact extrusion process. However, the torque load capacity of a torsion bar inherently depends on its diameter as is well known. The devices in Clute and Wier depend on this fact. The claims are directed to a torsion bar and not a process of making or using one and the forming process recited in the claims is a known one.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. The new grounds of rejection were necessitated by the amendment of claim 1, lines 5-7 and by the addition of claim 8. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SCOTT HAUGLAND whose telephone number is (571)272-6945. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Fri., 10:00 am - 6:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Q. Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-6952. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/John Q. Nguyen/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3654

/SJH/
7/2/09